

Micro-45 Survey Results

December 1 – 5 , 2012

Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada

<http://www.microsymposia.org/micro45>

Survey Questions

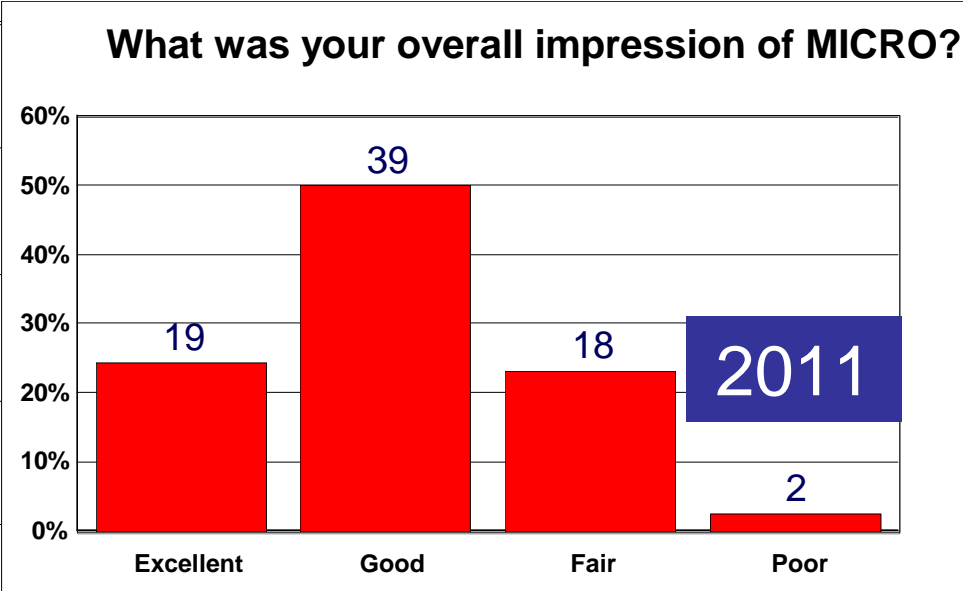
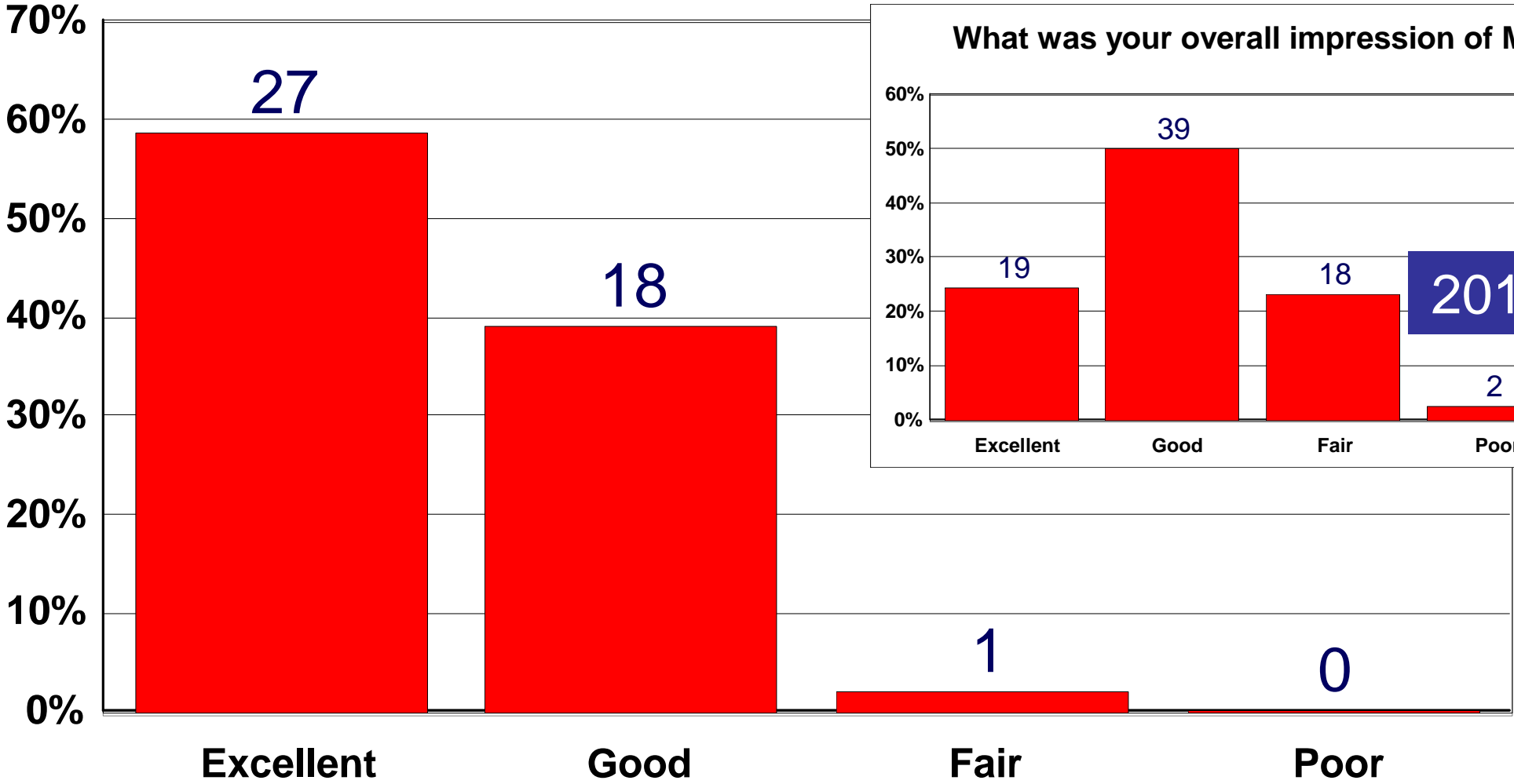
1. What was your overall impression of MICRO?
2. What was your impression of the MICRO Workshops and Tutorials?
3. What was your view of the Lightning Session of 1-minute paper presentations?
4. What was your impression of the poster session?
5. What was your impression of the Fairmont Hotel as a venue for MICRO?
6. What was your impression of Vancouver as a venue for MICRO?
7. If talks were videotaped and made available online, would you be:
8. What do you most prefer for accessing papers during next year's MICRO conference?
9. How was the organization of MICRO?
10. Please provide any other comments

For questions 1-7, the choices to mark were:

- Excellent Good Fair Poor N/A (for some questions)

46 Respondents total (through January 2, 2013)

What was your overall impression of MICRO?



Comments: What was your overall impression of MICRO?

All comments positive, but one

- Very well organized, I liked the lightning session.
- This was the best Micro I attended. I enjoyed the new lightning and poster sessions.
- High quality papers, organization and lots of discussions!
- It was well-organized, provided many opportunities to network, and the added lightning+poster sessions provided an opportunity to see the papers in the tracks I couldn't visit.

Criticism

- Too few people were chatting outside at any given moment. Listening to talks is nice, but one major reason people go to conferences is for networking. Typically people would listen to 4-5 talks that are important to them, and talk with fellow researchers and faculty the rest of the time to exchange ideas, learn of new directions, get feedback on their work, etc. This MICRO had very little of that.

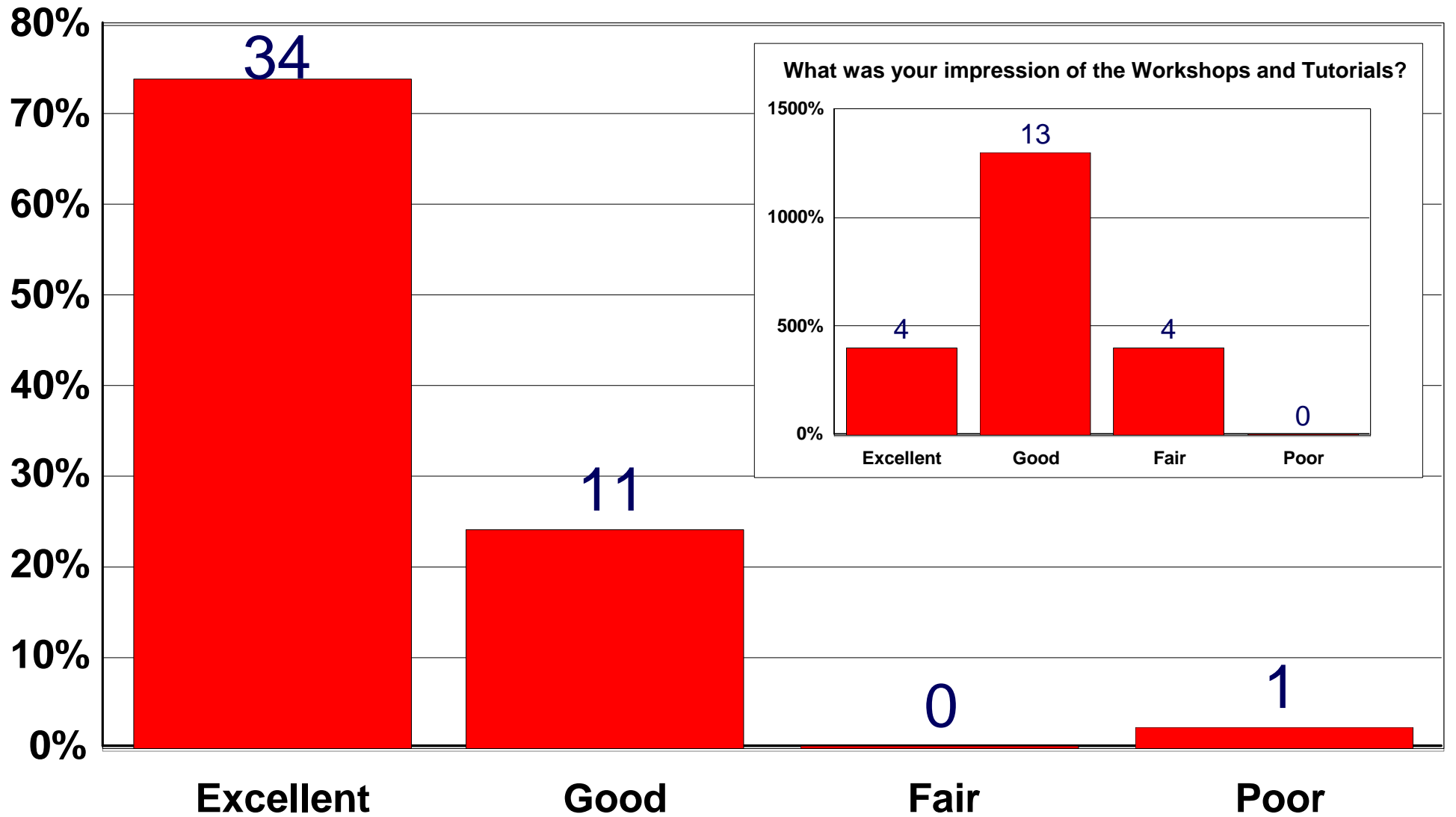
What was your impression of the Workshops and Tutorials?



Comments: What was your impression of the Workshops and Tutorials?

- The MARSS tutorial was interesting, but I expected some hands on activities. The other workshops were not as good as expected
- GEM5 was very useful

What was your view of the Lightning Session of 1-minute paper presentation



More favorable views of Lightning Session than Workshops / Tutorials

Comments – 1: Lightning Session

General Sentiment:

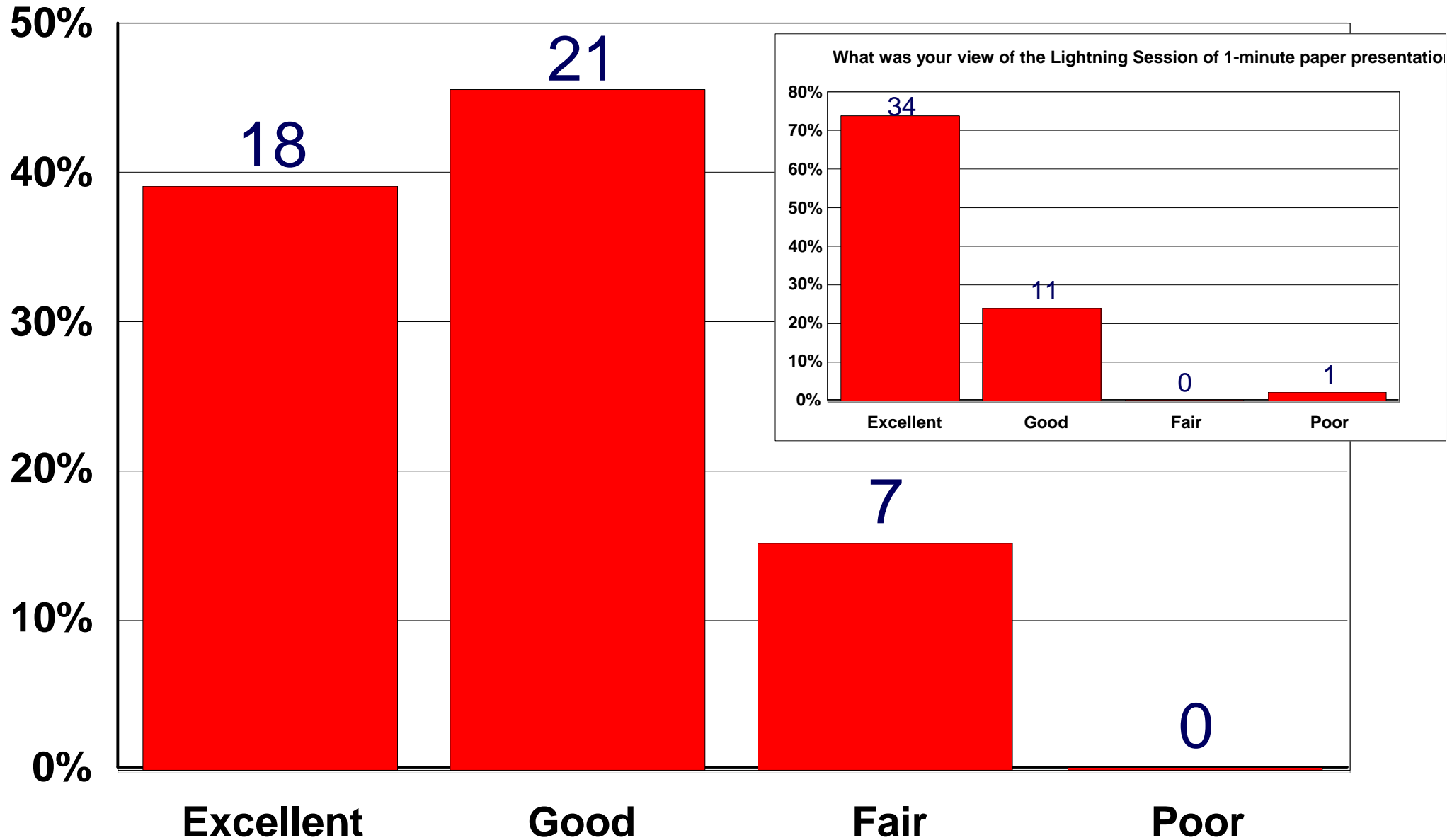
Great idea, but a break may help

- This was a lot of fun, got some extra exposure for the students, and I think it'll continue to improve in the coming years as people get to see what works and what doesn't.
- Needs a 20min break in the middle. Cramming 50 ideas in 1.5h is too much.
- Some good, some bad. Many people focused too much on detail and the point of their paper was lost
- Lightning session is a great idea. It went smoothly. It might be better to have a short (5-minute) bio break halfway, but keep it as a single session for the entire conference. Other conferences should also adopt this.
- A break in between would help
- Worked really well. One could get a good sense of the entire program by attending one session. I hope future architecture conferences emulate this success. Perhaps, adding a short break (or just a bit of a breather) in the middle of the lightning session could help.
- Great idea! Really useful to pick the best papers from the parallel sessions.
- Hard to stay focused through all 40 presentations. Perhaps splitting the lightning session across Monday and Tuesday mornings would address this.

Comments – 2: Lightning Session

- Extremely helpful in determining which talks to listen to.
- Hope this becomes the tradition for all architecture conferences.
- This was a great idea. The format could be better: 40 back-to-back pitches was hard to take in. I suggest shortening the pitches to 60 sec and breaking them up into 2-3 rounds with a short break in-between
- Why didn't we think this of earlier.
- This was a great idea. However, its a lot of information to absorb in a short time. Perhaps doing 1 lightning session at the beginning of each day (to preview that day) would be better.
- Great idea which was executed very well; I would have preferred a 100-second clock visible to the speaker.
- This was very helpful to fine-tune which papers I should attend. In some cases, it made me switch from what I had presently planned.
- lightning session was good for exposing presenters who couldn't get many attention in the presentation due to parallel session
- Really good. All conferences should do this.

What was your impression of the poster session?



Comments – 1: Poster Session

General Sentiment:

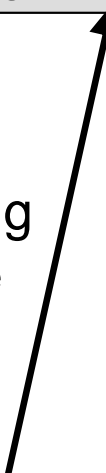
Great idea, some logistical issues

- Great way to interact with the authors in a deeper fashion, as well as to see some papers that one may have otherwise missed (e.g., due to parallel sessions).
- I think it would be nice if posters were up in the morning, so people can browse and read them ahead of time.
- poster placement vs. food location biased foot traffic.
- Poster session was very useful. I learned a lot during the poster session about the papers whose talks I could not attend for various reasons. Having drinks (beer and wine) during the poster session could make it even better.
- This idea was brilliant
- More space between posters could help.
- I loved talking to the authors of the MICRO papers in the poster session. It was really interesting since all posters were "high-quality" posters. This is not the case in many conferences where work in progress is presented and the quality of the posters suffers a huge variability.
- The poster boards provided were a different size than what the authors were told. Disappointing to put work into a poster and then have it look bad because of the smaller poster boards.

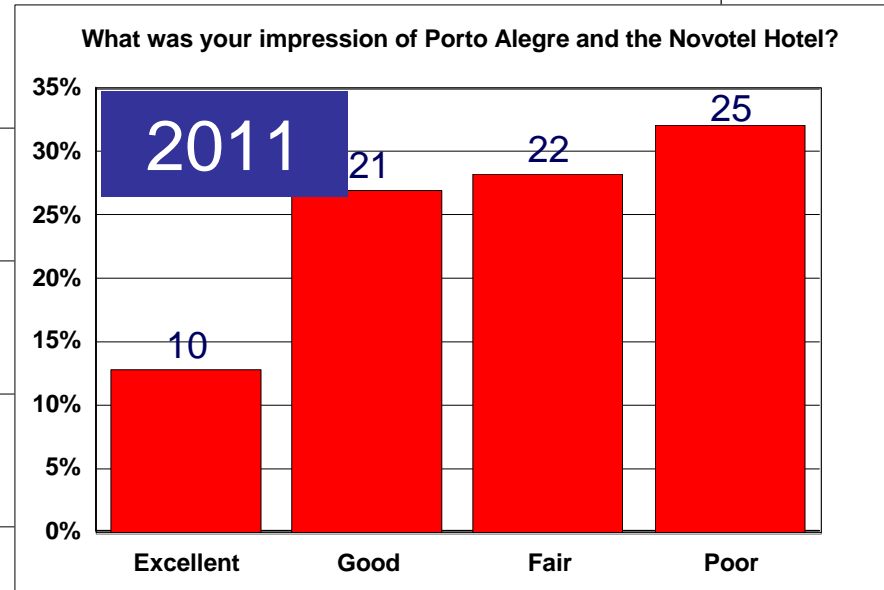
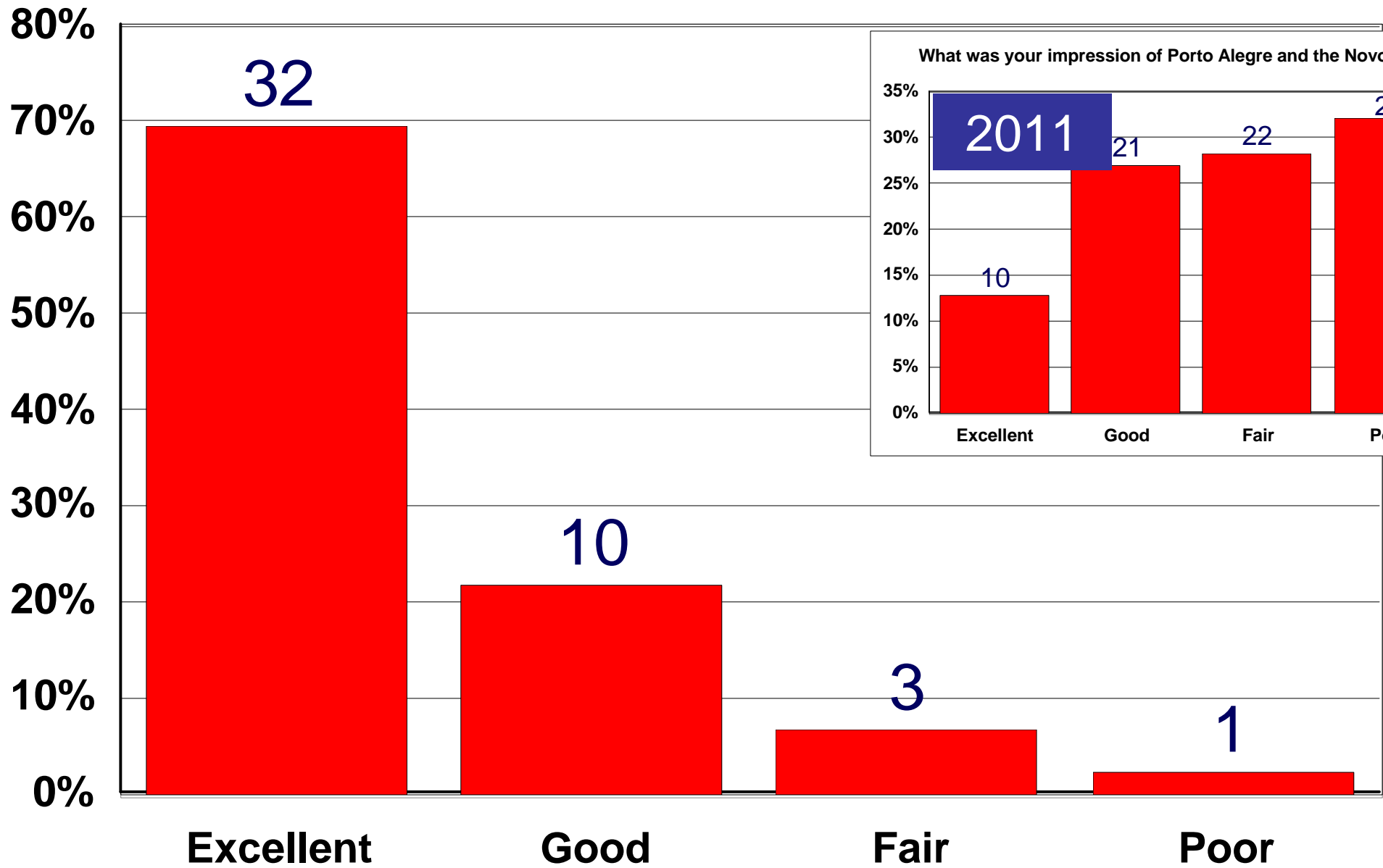
Comments – 2: Poster Session

- A larger room should have been arranged.
- Split the posters over multiple sessions.
- Should be spread out instead of one marathon session
- Good chance for conversation with authors.
- Only suggestion I'd make is to organize them. I circled around many times trying to find specific ones only to discover often they were ones for which there were no posters !
- The idea of a poster session is great; the execution this time was lacking.
 1. I don't think the best poster award is a good idea. It's not the poster that's important, it's that the author/presenter is available for discussion of their work without distractions present during the breaks/lunch/excursion. The poster itself is of secondary importance, and I don't think we should provide an incentive for authors to spend a lot of time making fancy posters.
 2. I think poster presenters felt the need to stay by their poster at all times to make sure the anonymous award committee member would find them there. There should be a way for these 40 people to also walk around and talk to other poster presenters without fear of being overlooked.
 3. Poster boards were of the wrong size.

Note: No poster award was given



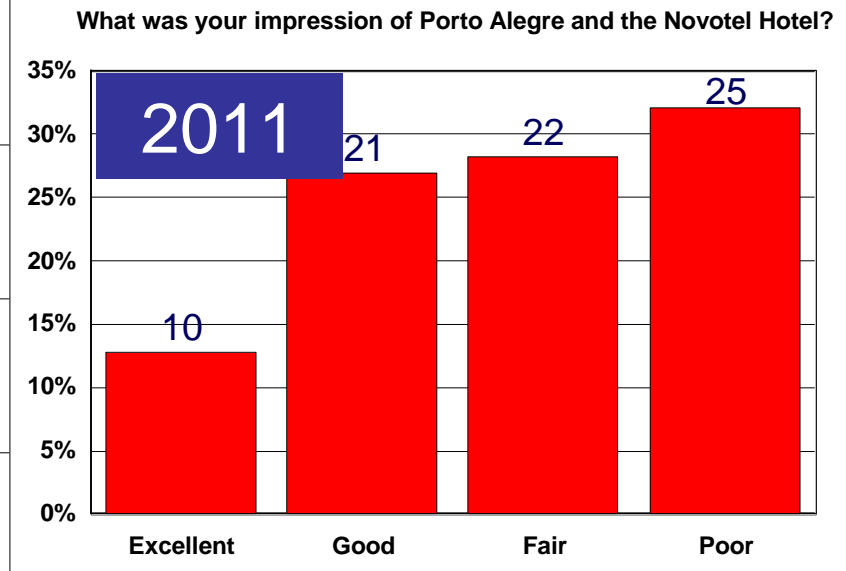
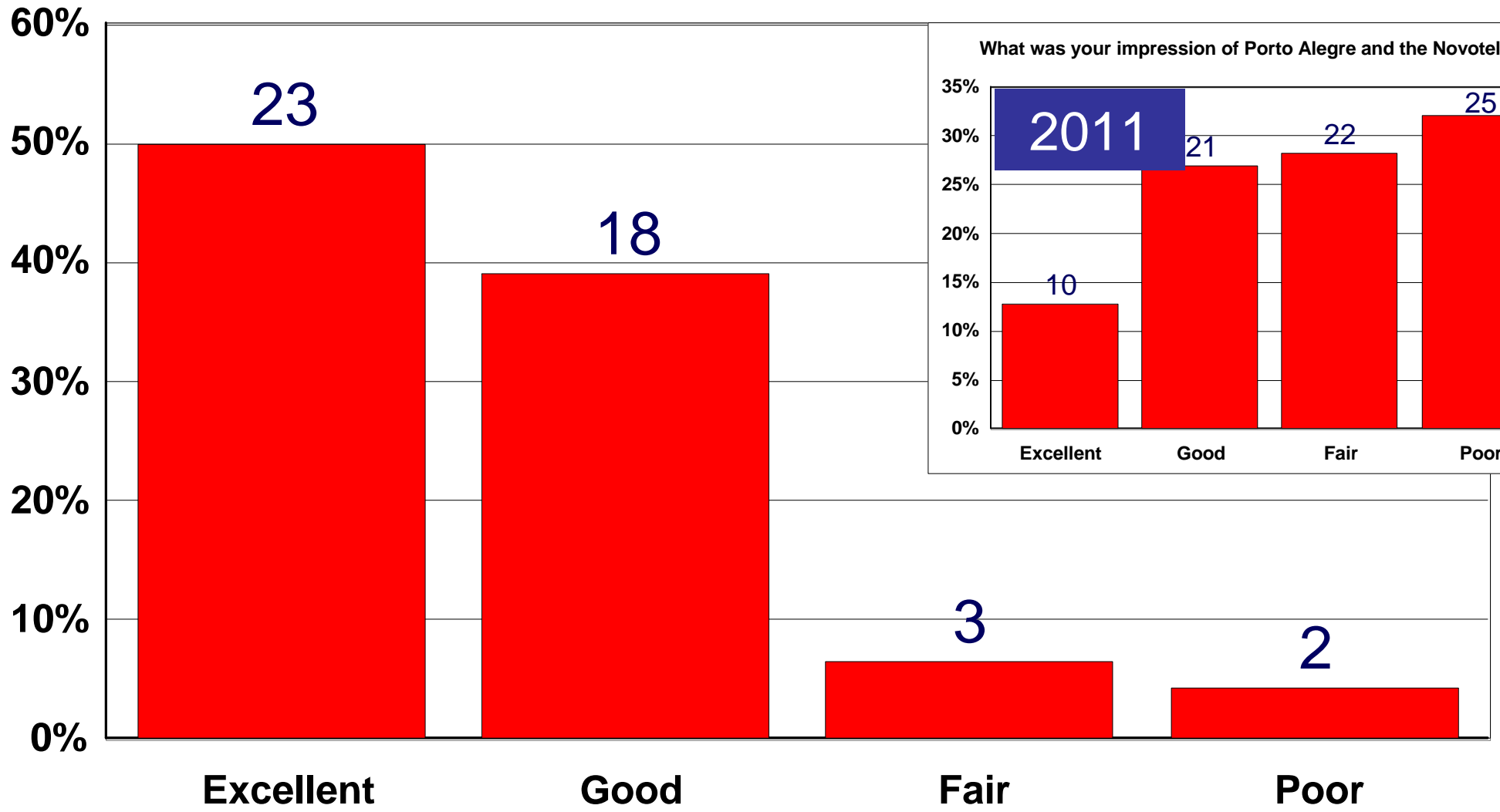
What was your impression of Vancouver as a venue for MICRO?



Comments: Vancouver

- Fantastic city.
- Loved it.
- Too much rain in Dec, but the city is really nice.
- Great city, wrong time of year for it.
- Great location as well even though the weather wasn't terribly accommodating.

What was your impression of the Fairmont Hotel as a venue for MICRO?



Comments: Fairmont Hotel

Compliments

- Good location, easy to reach from the airport, had everything we needed. Maybe I missed some food during the coffee breaks, but I'm happy with the hotel.
- Good location, nice setup. Even the food (especially lunch on the Monday) was good.

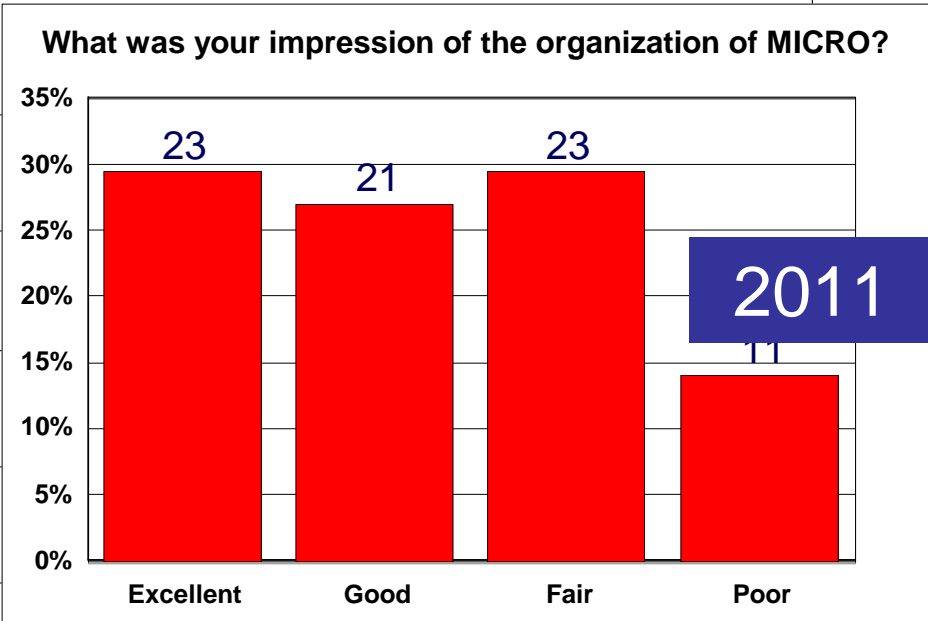
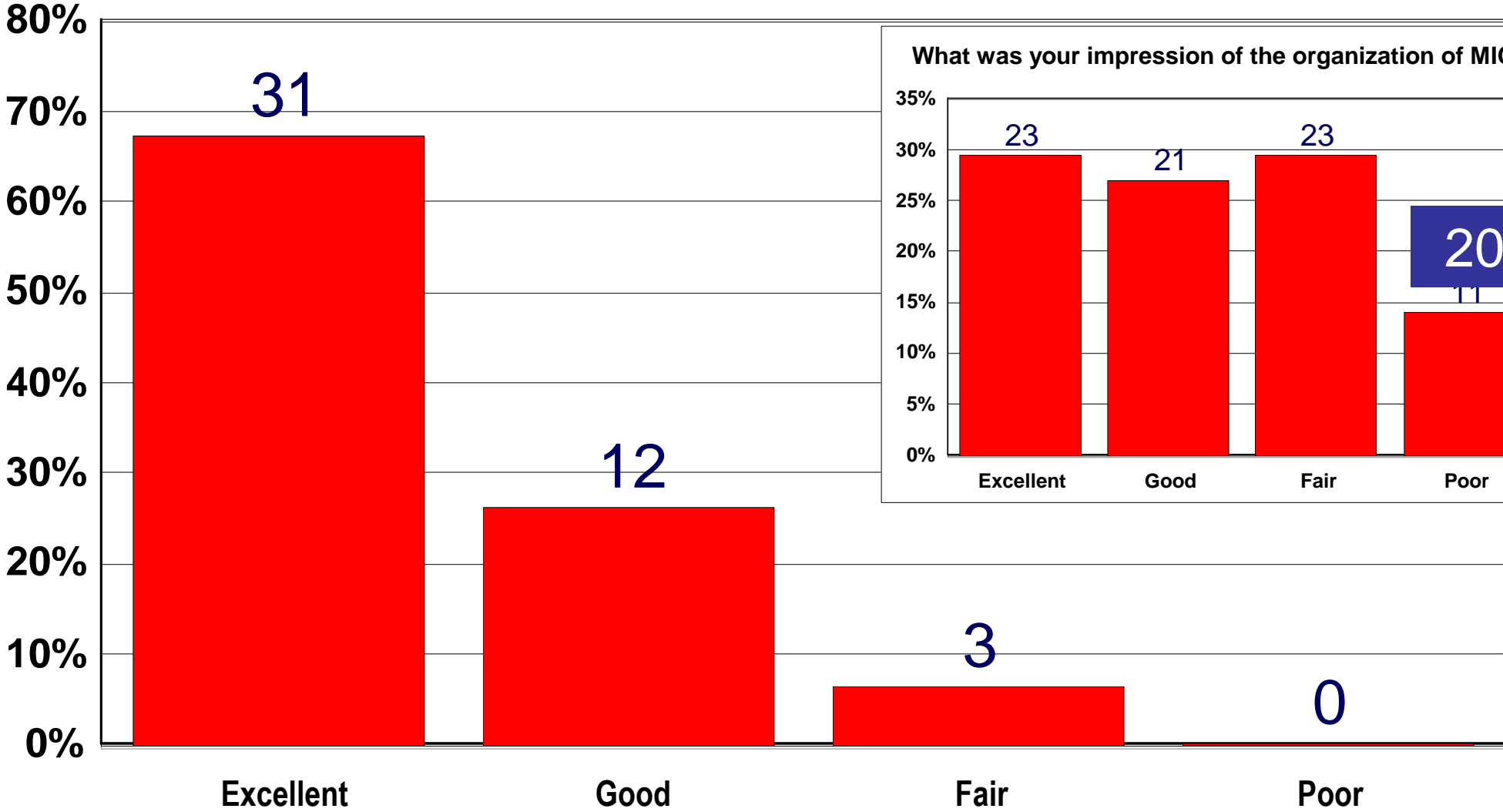
Mixed

- The price was very good especially for the quality of hotel. The area where breaks were held was too cold.
- Given the conference price point, the hotel was excellent. I wish that the information about the free "in-room" internet were publicised by the organizers.

Critiques

- Food was somewhat mediocre; very poor food selection for vegetarian diets.
- Too pricey for it's quality
- Everything was super expensive (e.g, parking fee was insane). A hotel that is a bit remote could help reduce the price.
- The breakfast on Wednesday was very lacking. The only drink available during breaks was coffee. Water and perhaps soft drinks should be available.
- Expensive part of Vancouver, \$8.00 for a bottle of water

How was the organization of MICRO?



Comments – 1: Micro Organization

Compliments

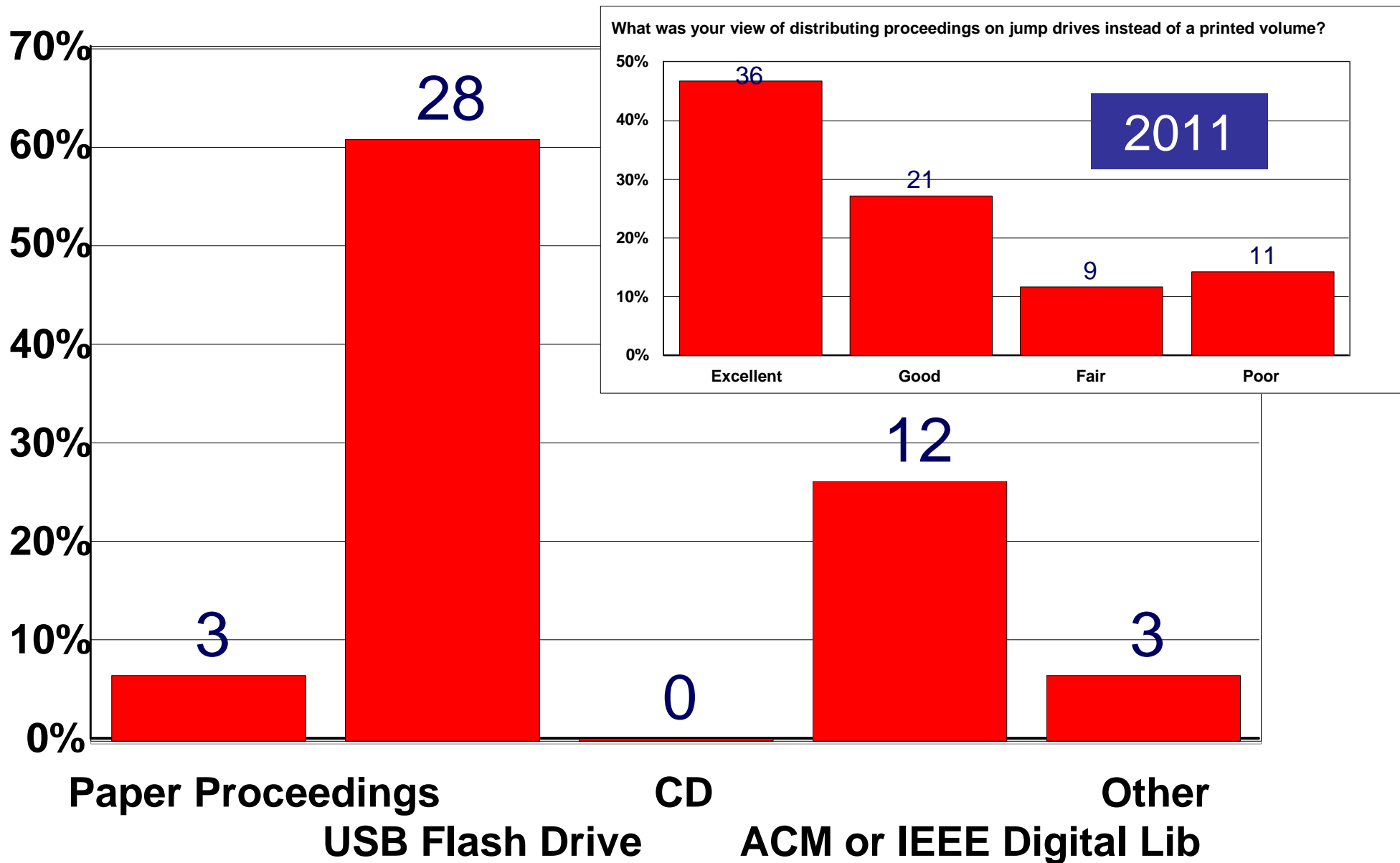
- Organizers seemed to put in 300% more effort than other conferences I have attended. The end result was a conference that was 30% better. I am very appreciative of all the hard work done by volunteers - the PC chair most of all.
- Kudos to program chair for his incessant efforts
- I was impressed by the huge effort made by the organization. Congrats!
- The track assignments & pairings were good. The chairs kept the sessions on time even enabling people to switch sessions midway if they wanted.

Comments – 2: Micro Organization

Critiques

- All in all, this was a very well organized conference. I did wish for more/better munchies at the reception and during breaks.
- No food at the reception? No finger food at breaks? For \$550/\$325 a piece? While SIGMICRO begs to spend its growing money reserves? Tsk tsk tsk...
- There was no coffee in last day. That was rude. Also not enough seats in first day.
- No snacks at coffee breaks!
- There were a few minor issues: wrong poster board size, food being not available after 8:30am on last day, very short time for lunch on Tuesday during which the servers drowned out the speaker by noisily collecting plates.
- Conference area was a little tricky to navigate. Frequently got turned around and partially lost the first day or so. Some additional signs ("MICRO 2012 Sessions -->") might have been nice, but this is somewhat minor.

What do you most prefer for accessing papers during next year's M



Comments: Proceedings Format

- Flash drive is very convenient (it would take too long and too many clicks to download everything from an online DL). CD is ok, too (cheaper for the conference), but it being slightly bulkier is less convenient for transport (but that's really a pretty minor issue).
- Open-access journal
- Like having media with everything in one place
- It is good to keep the option of purchasing paper proceedings. It would be better if the papers were online at ACM/IEEE Digital libraries before the conference.
- Download them from a specific location the first day of the conference. This location should be available for a limited duration (i.e. only until the digital libraries have the pdfs).
- Flash drive is convenient for download all papers onto the laptop at once. Having online access to the proceedings during the conference would also be convenient.
- No paper proceedings. USB is nice, but does not work with iPad. Making it available over wifi (at conference venue) would be fantastic.
- My preference is online (less to carry), however if the availability of the pdf online is limited (such as for a few weeks), then USB would be better.
- some open website accessible to all

If talks were videotaped and made available online,



Comments: Videotape Talks / Online

- I think lots of people would like this; personally, I'm just so busy I know I would intend to watch a lot of them, but then never actually get around to it (like that pile of books on my nightstand...).
- I feel some of the talks are not so well prepared and the information is always a subset of what is in the paper, so most likely watching videos won't add much value (but having videos for the record is good).
- Again, some talks were more useful than others.
- Recording the talks and publishing them online is a great idea. Micro should make an investment for recording all future talks and making them available online. This would enable the conference to reach many people who cannot attend the conference.
- Archiving talks would be very useful, especially for those who could not attend the conference. There is no downside to doing it, other than the fact that it adds more work for the organizers.
- Maybe not that critical for talks, but for keynotes, where no reference than the talk itself (modulo an abstract eventually) exists
- I could see providing links to coworkers to view presentations associated with the papers as those often present the information in a more succinct way.

Other Comments: Compliments

- Great conference. Just wish the best poster and best paper selections had been announced on site. In the future I would like an intermission during the lightning presentation session. Onur Mutlu's "summoning bell" should be standard issue at all conferences!
- Excursion was good. Drinks should be served *inside* the room during the business meeting (perhaps not allowed by the hotel?).
- I think the lightning session should be kept as well as the poster sessions. I'm also big fan of open access to papers (e.g. links from conference program) so perhaps the papers can be published in a way that they can be freely distributed.
- Overall the conference was very well run and the minor points mentioned [in comments to other questions] should be easily addressable in the future.
- There were many good quality papers & ideas presented. Even the presentation of the rating process for paper selection was interesting as it provided insight to others on how the papers were evaluated and perhaps will improve the quality of them further in subsequent years.

Other Comments: Critiques

- Some food at the Sunday night reception would have been nice.
- It is better to have more food during the breaks. Overall food quality was good. Future Program Chairs should be similarly transparent.
- The acceptance rate was lower compared to isca/hpca. High percentage of pc authored papers... Having long deliberation on papers could go either ways, it could improve the quality of papers but could also encourage incremental papers which have more complete evaluation rather than novel idea papers...
- I felt that this edition of MICRO lacked diversity in topics. There were too many papers on memory system design (DRAM and caches), which is an important problem, but there were too few papers on other important issues (e.g., not enough discussion on topics such as security, mobile systems, and data centers). I am not sure if the problem is with the submissions or with the selection process.

Other Comments: Suggestions – 1

- It would be nice to distribute the slides and posters too.
- A thought for future conferences:
 - It would be great to have a smartphone app for downloading the scheduling and planning one's day by marking talks to attend.
 - This could be a straight-forward project for a reasonably skilled CS undergrad.

Other Comments: Suggestions – 2

- I liked the many statistics shown regarding the submission by the Program Chair, and I very much appreciate it. If I can ask one more thing:
 - I would like to know what was the key reason why each paper got accepted, which is like the ones presented in the SIGOPS EuroSys conference this year:
 - <http://eurossys2012.unibe.ch/program/reviews>
 - This would definitely help:
 - the community understand in which directions that the PC members are paying their attention to,
 - provide more transparency, and much more additional benefits
 - (I know I'm asking for additional work on top of already a very very heavy task for the organizers, so I do understand even if it's not possible).

Other Comments: Suggestions – 3

[Multiple Suggestions from one person:]

- **Regarding shepherding:** Hopefully this will be the state-of-the-art across all arch. conferences, with all papers being (potentially) shepherded -- not necessarily the conditionally-accepted ones. May help with the progressively dropping quality of papers in our conferences.
- **Regarding reviews:** As long as the authors can respond once, where the PC/reviewers can take multiple passes, I am not sure how much room exists for improvement. We need to find a way to involve the authors in the discussion about their papers by PC. I wish I knew how.
- **Regarding awards:** There is no point in getting paranoid about fairness in the presence of inevitable sources of unfairness (which exists by construction). Eliminating conflict of interests and ensuring pre-selection discussion -- to the extent possible -- should suffice. That said, I am not sure how you were able to track conflicts of interest as marked on the ballots effectively. In the end, only a sub-set of people vote, and there exists mafias, unfortunately. This makes the discussion component much more critical, yet the committee to draw such decisions suffer from the exact above-mentioned restrictions. I am interested to see how much correlation exists btw best presentation, best poster and best paper. Would point to whether attendees were really judging based on presentation skills for best present.&poster rather than the content, as expected.